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W. Arndt

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Book Review — Literatur

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

A Dictionary of the Bible. Comprising Its Antiquities, Biography, Geography, and Natural History. Edited by William Smith, LL.D., Classical Examiner in the University of London and Editor of the Dictionaries of "Greek and Roman Antiquities," "Biography and Mythology," and "Geography." Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, London, etc. 776 pages, 8×11 (cyclopedic edition). Price, \$2.00.

Smith's *Bible Dictionary* has been in the hands of Bible students for a number of decades and is highly prized on account of its excellent scholarship and reliability. The work before us must be distinguished from the larger *Bible Dictionary* which Dr. Smith issued in three large volumes and in the preparation of which he was aided by seventy learned theologians. He became aware that the latter work was too voluminous and expensive for non-professional readers of the Bible. Hence he himself prepared a smaller dictionary of one volume "for the use of schools, Sunday-school teachers, and young persons in general." It is this work which in an American edition is lying before us. The publishers say that nothing contained in the smaller dictionary drawn up by Dr. Smith himself is here omitted, that, on the contrary, at several points additions taken from the larger dictionary of Dr. Smith have been inserted. It is claimed that even in this abridged form this dictionary includes references to every subject, person, place, or event mentioned in the Bible. As other advantages which this edition possesses the publishers mention: "1) It is printed in type of a heavy, distinct, and very legible face. 2) The most careful endeavor and accurate scholarship have been enlisted to avoid reproducing the errors which crept into the English edition. 3) The pronunciation of names is the only matter in which Dr. Smith is open to serious criticism. English authorities differ from American. Our standard lexicographers have been followed so as to adapt the work to the American people and give it a merit possessed by no other reprint. 4) This is also the only reprint by an American publisher of the abridgment made by Dr. Smith's own hand." The fundamental theology of the book is Reformed. The attitude toward the Scriptures is that of a believer. It ought to be stated that, since this work first appeared as far back as 1866, one cannot expect to find in it a consideration and use of the great discoveries made in the field of Biblical archeology and history during the last seventy-five years. As to the pronunciation of proper names, the reader will notice that this feature is here limited to the marking of the accented syllables. The work contains over 100 woodcuts, valuable maps, 24 large steel and wood engravings of ancient cities and memorable places, and is strongly and handsomely bound. On account of its conservative character and the care with which it was written the book is still of value, and the publishers are entitled to our thanks.

W. ARNDT

Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament. Band V. Die Apostelgeschichte. Von D. Otto Bauernfeind, Professor an der Universität Tübingen. A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung. Leipzig. 1939. 283 Seiten 7½×10½. Preis: Gebfettet: RM. 12; gebunden: RM. 14.50.

Seit dem Aufblühen der sogenannten Tübinger Schule hat es wohl kein Buch des Neuen Testaments gegeben, das mit mehr Sorgfalt studiert worden wäre als die Apostelgeschichte. Wem fallen, wenn wir von älteren Werken absehen, nicht sogleich die Namen von Harnack und Ramsay ein als von Gelehrten, die sich in hervorragendem Maße mit diesem Buch beschäftigt haben? Der vorliegende, mit allen Mitteln der Wissenschaft hergestellte Kommentar ist mehr der Besprechung grundlegender Gedanken gewidmet als der Lösung sämtlicher Einzelfragen, die dem Leser des griechischen Textes der Apostelgeschichte entgegentreten. Für letzteres hätte allerdings das Buch zwei- oder dreimal so umfangreich sein müssen. „Die Apostelgeschichte will Zeugnis vom Kampf und Sieg des Evangeliums in der christusfremden Welt sein“, so beginnt der Verfasser, und wir stimmen ihm zu. Diese einleitenden Worte geben gleichsam den Ton an, der sich durch das ganze Werk hindurchzieht.

Jeder Leser wird wissen wollen, wie der Verfasser zu den hauptsächlichsten einschlägigen kritischen Fragen steht; darum einige Bemerkungen darüber. Das Vorkommen der „Wir“-Stücke ist ihm ein Beweis, daß der Schreiber wenigstens eine schriftliche Quelle benutzt habe. Die Ansicht Torrey's, daß die ersten fünfzehn Kapitel ursprünglich aramäisch geschrieben gewesen seien, hält er mit Recht für nicht überzeugend begründet. Daß der Schreiber ein Arzt war, kann man nach seiner Ansicht nicht absolut aus der Apostelgeschichte beweisen. Nach seinem Dafürhalten sind bei der Abfassung der Apostelgeschichte weder die Briefe Pauli noch die Schriften des Josephus benutzt worden. Er stimmt dem Zeugnis der alten Kirche bei, daß das dritte Evangelium und die Apostelgeschichte von ein und demselben Schreiber stammen. Über die „Wir“-Stücke ist sein Urteil, daß sie von einem Begleiter Pauli herrühren und daß dieser Begleiter der Arzt Lukas war; während er in diesem Punkt das Zeugnis der alten Kirche annimmt, wird er leider skeptisch in bezug auf die Nachricht der alten Kirche, daß Lukas die (ganze) Apostelgeschichte geschrieben habe. Die Theorie Blah', zur Erklärung der vielen sogenannten „westlichen“ Zusätze erfunden, daß Lukas selbst zwei Ausgaben der Apostelgeschichte besorgt habe, eine längere und eine kürzere, ist ihm noch nicht genügend bewiesen. Die Anlage des Kommentars ist diese, daß eine Übersetzung mit in Klammern beigefügten Erklärungen geboten wird, der dann eine zusammenhängende Besprechung folgt. Textkritische Bemerkungen sind auf ein Minimum beschränkt. In zehn Exkursen werden besonders wichtige Fragen, wie die Gütergemeinschaft in Jerusalem, eingehend besprochen.

Beim Lesen der exegetischen Ausführungen merkt man bald, wie weit der Verfasser davon entfernt ist, die Apostelgeschichte als wörtlich inspiriertes Gotteswort anzuerkennen. Anstatt z. B. bei der Erörterung von Kap. 1, 15 ff. die Erklärungen gläubiger Ausleger, die er „apologetische Notlösungen“ nennt, auch nur anzuführen, redet er von einem „kräftigen Verstoß gegen die geschichtlichen Möglichkeiten“. Bei der großen Pfingstperikope entsteht ihm die Frage, ob gewisse „Unebenheiten und Spannungen im lukanischen Text nicht Anlaß geben zur Aussonderung älterer geformter Traditionen“. Man fragt unwillkürlich, ob wirklich viel Unterschied ist zwischen dem vor etwa hundert Jahren zu Grabe getragenen

Aufgärationalismus und dieser neueren kritischen Weise, die ebenfalls sich weigert, daß in der Schrift Gebotene gläubig hinzunehmen und lieber von Unebenheiten und Spannungen redet, als einen Bericht gelten zu lassen, worin für uns Unbegreifliches erzählt wird. Es ist also dieser Kommentar trotz seines Bestrebens, den großen Grundgedanken der Apostelgeschichte gerecht zu werden, doch auf rationalistische Irrwege geraten und spekuliert, anstatt darzulegen und zu erklären.

W. Arndt

The Romance of the Creed-Builders. By Rev. R. H. Gearhart, Jr. The Castle Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 67 pages, 5½×7½.

The Romance of the Creed-Builders is a liberal student-pastor's (U. L. C. A.) view of how the early Christian creeds (e. g., the *Apostolicum*) came into existence. Ignoring well-known historical facts and regarding the early Christians as religious experientialists, with little or no regard for the Bible as the only source and norm of the Christian faith, he describes the creeds as experimental developments of God-possessed men and women. "First, they had a knowledge of the historic Jesus; second, a recognition of His capacity to demonstrate God; third, an experience of that capacity translated in some degree to themselves as they found Him living within them; fourth, a growth of their own experience, as in continued comradeship with Him they shared Him with others [?], both within and without the fellowship of believers" (p. 27). This shows how far Liberals will go in perverting history in the interest of their pernicious rationalism. We regret that the author of this intrinsically untrue and misleading monograph calls himself a Lutheran minister, for sound Lutheranism holds that creeds are nothing else than declarations of the faith, drawn from Holy Scripture in witness against heresy.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

"That the World May Believe." By Jesse Leonard Yelvington. Zondervan Publishing House. Grand Rapids, Mich. 112 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.00.

This is a stimulating, helpful book, perhaps stronger in this feature than in that of exposition and information; for exactness of exegetical development is often lacking. However, that may be due to the purpose of the book, which grew out of the author's work as evangelist of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The addresses on John 17 which are here offered are notable in particular for the many Bible quotations, a fact which gives to the entire book an authoritative character. It is unfortunate that the author regards the observance of Sunday as a part of the Moral Law (p. 90), that his exposition of Phil. 2:5 ff. is certainly not adequate (p. 39), and that he thinks the body of Christ, in which He was incarnated in the Virgin Birth, was a natural body subject to the passions and temptations of natural bodies (p. 18), whereas the explanation of the mystery lies in the imputation of the weakness of man's nature to the person of the Savior, not in essential or inherent weakness in human nature itself. We have marked passages of great beauty and strength in the book, such as that which describes the work of Christ as the Master Teacher (p. 66) and his fine distinction between

social service as it follows the preaching of the Gospel of salvation and the so-called social gospel of Modernism. Every preacher who needs an exposition of John 17 for preaching purposes or for Bible-class work may derive much benefit from the careful study of this book.

P. E. KRETZMANN

For Better, Not For Worse. By Dr. Walter A. Maier. Third edition. 598 pages, 6×9¼. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price: Regular cloth edition, \$2.50; gift edition, \$3.00.

This is the fourth printing and, at the same time, the third edition of our colleague's well-known book. The author has reworked the entire volume, has placed stronger emphasis on a number of important points, has added much illustrative material, etc. The book is written in defense of the sanctity of marriage over against the scurrilous and blasphemous attacks directed against this divine institution by Satan and his allies of every type. The very fact that the book is now appearing in its third edition is ample proof that it fills an urgent need and that the blessing of the Author of marriage is resting upon this book. May it continue on its blessed course and help to counteract the many evil influences tending to undermine marriage and the home!

TR. LAETSCH

Heralds of Salvation. By Frank Grenville Beardsley, Ph. D. 218 pages. The American Tract Society. Price, \$1.25.

Dr. Beardsley, the author, was educated at Western College and received his degree of Ph. D. from Wesleyan University in 1897. In 1900 he received his degree of D. B. from Oberlin College. In 1912 the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology was given him by Kansas City University. He has served important Congregational churches in Salem, Iowa; Des Moines, Iowa; Kansas City, Kans.; Keokuk, Iowa; Aurora, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; and was for a number of years professor of theology at Taladega Theological Seminary and has been chaplain of the Missouri Society S. A. R. since 1925. He has published a number of books, such as *History of American Revivals* and *History of Christianity in America*.

In this volume he has performed a real service by giving us brief biographical sketches (approximately 15 pages each) about men whose biographies are not always readily accessible, most of them men important in the history of the Church in America. The lives of the following men are presented: Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Francis Asbury, Asahel Nettleton, Peter Cartwright, Charles G. Finney, Jacob Knapp, John Vassar, Dwight L. Moody, William Booth, J. Wilbur Chapman, R. A. Torrey, Billy Sunday, and Rodney Smith. Our pastors and teachers will find the book very practical and full of human interest. There is ample material here for many lectures before various groups in their churches.

W. G. POLACK

Expository Preaching. By Jeff D. Ray, Professor of Homiletics, Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 123 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$1.00.

There is so much said in this book that will make for better preaching and better reading of the Scriptures in public that we highly recom-

mend it to our preachers. The author says: "Except the growing worldliness of its members, the pulpit is the church's weak spot. A strong, virile church was never gathered around a weak pulpit. . . . Most of the men in the ministry today are good men, but most of them are not first-rate preachers" (p. 14). "Expository preaching is the ideal method, . . . the most difficult method" (p. 53). "A sermon is half preached when the preacher gives his audience a fresh, gripping theme well stated" (p. 110).

In spite of his insistence on sound exegesis the writer of the book evidently does not know that, when Jesus says, "I am the Door," the figure of speech is in the word "door," and when He says, "This is My body," "This is My blood," a figure of speech cannot be in the copula "is." The copula does not permit a figurative employment. And, of course, in taking the words of institution literally, we do not teach transubstantiation nor consubstantiation (pp. 91, 92).

The author of the book is professor of homiletics. Since he has taught the art of preaching for more than thirty years and heard preachers "in hundreds of pulpits throughout the land," he is well qualified to give expert advice. Every preacher will do well to read the stimulating book which he has written.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Horizons of Hope. Fourteen Sermons for the Lenten and Easter Season.

By Dr. O. A. Geiseman. 125 pages. Price, \$1.00.

In these sermons Dr. Geiseman uses plain, simple language. The trend of thought in each of them is easily followed. There is nothing stereotype about the make-up, but the matter is solid, reliable, and timely. The illustrations are in good taste, and the appeal draws by its warmth and simplicity. There are two Easter sermons. These and the address to the catechumens on the day of their confirmation are especially impressive.

M. S. SOMMER

Forty Thousand Strong. By Henry H. Bagger. The United Lutheran Publication House. 64 pages, 4¾×6¾. Price, 15 cts. a copy; \$11.00 a hundred.

This booklet of 64 pages was "prepared under the auspices of The Parish- and Church-school Board of the United Lutheran Church in America." It is intended to be used by the forty thousand councilmen of that church-body as a study book, so that they will take the duties of their office more seriously and become more efficient.

Speaking of the calling of a pastor, the author of the booklet advises that a pulpit committee hear candidates preach in their respective churches; when a suitable man is found, invite him to preach a trial sermon and present only one name to the congregation for consideration at any one time (pp. 43, 44). In line with this is "the right of recall or the terminating of the contractual relationship when congregational and synodical welfare make it appear desirable or necessary, even though specifically disciplinary charges are not involved," which recall "shall become effective by a two-thirds majority of all the votes cast at a duly called congregational meeting" (pp. 46, 47). Such procedure conflicts

with the divinity of the call. It is tantamount to a mere contract made by men. Such a minister becomes a hireling who will be tempted to please men rather than God, so that he may retain their good will and his position.

A paragraph referring to the Galesburg Rule reads as follows: "The 'Model Constitution' also makes the council responsible for seeing to it that 'the Sacraments are properly administered.' Here the question of 'open' or 'close' Communion looms large and whether or not an 'invitation' shall be given. These issues of pulpit- and altar-fellowship have been helpfully dealt with in the Galesburg Rule, enunciated in 1860. It is not absolute but guiding in its spirit. It states in substance that the principle shall be 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only,' while in the field of practice 'exceptions shall be in the sphere of privilege and not of right.' The degree of privilege to be granted is for the pastor and deacons to determine—and not for the world or for the people of other faiths than our own. The custom and practice of a community will naturally enter the picture but that council whose pastor is reasonably strict in these things can be happy and should support him" (pp.34, 35). Such a pronouncement is in line with the laxity of the U. L. C. in doctrine and in practice and is therefore not at all surprising but deplorable nevertheless.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Concordia Bible Teacher. Prepared under the Auspices of the Board of Christian Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Rev. A. C. Mueller, Editor. Published quarterly by Concordia Publishing House. Each issue 72 pages, 4¼x7. Price, 75 cts. per annum.

The preparations for the lessons contained in the *Concordia Bible Student* as here offered show a great amount of painstaking search. Any teacher who has the time, and takes the time, to work through the preparation of the lessons as here offered will derive a great deal of benefit for his work in class, provided the material is *not adopted, but adapted*, that is, actually adjusted to the personality and the teaching situation of the individual class. That is the one great misgiving which the present reviewer has with regard to a large amount of the material in the line of helps which has appeared in recent years. The *subject-matter* is excellent, as a rule, but there is ample evidence of a regimentation, possibly unconscious, yet nevertheless definitely present. This tendency appears in many of the sermon helps that are being published, in helps for Sunday-school lessons and Sunday-school teachers' institutes that offer the very questions, down to the last particle, which are to be used by the instructors, and in other published material which is "fully cooked and predigested," containing not merely outlines and leading questions but every conceivable thought and every minor question that may have occurred to the respective editor. Even if the intention is good, the pedagogy of the situation, in the firm opinion of the present reviewer, is bad. Shall nothing be left by way of constructing

lesson plans to the group in the individual congregation and Sunday-school staff? Have we reached the stage when the teaching ministry of our Church has failed, so that we must depend upon canned lessons in every department of our church-work? If pastors and teachers feel the need of assistance, let them at least retain enough of the feeling of responsibility with regard to the teaching situations confronting them that they merely select material from such helps and construct their own lesson plans as these are required by the needs of their particular group. If this is not done, the last bit of initiative and individualism in parish-work will soon be a thing of the past. P. E. KREIZMANN

Verhandlungen der 39. Jahresversammlung des Süd-Wisconsin-Distrikts.
64 Seiten $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. Preis: 13 Cents. — *Proceedings of the Twentieth Convention of the Southern Illinois District.* 75 pages. Price, 14 cts. — *Proceedings of the Sixty-Second Convention of the Central District.* 92 pages. Price, 29 cts. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

These three reports may be highly recommended to all pastors and laymen in our circles. The report of the Southern Illinois District offers two instructive essays, one, by Pastor P. Schulz, on "The Local Congregation," the other, by Prof. F. E. Mayer, on "Das Predigtamt ist das höchste Amt in der Kirche." In the South Wisconsin District Rev. V. Mennicke in his German essay called attention to the fatal consequences of giving up the doctrine of verbal inspiration, and Prof. V. Bartling spoke on "The Confessionalism of Our Fathers." At the convention of the Central District Rev. K. R. Trautmann read a paper on "True and False Visible Churches," Pastor E. S. Husmann one on "The Duties of the Local Congregation." A third paper, read by Pastor J. D. Matthius, was not published. All the various papers make profitable reading.

TH. LAETSCH

Year Book 1940. Editor: W. H. Greever, Secretary of the U. L. C. A. United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa. 160 pages. Price, 25 cts.

Der Lutherische Kalender. Auf das Jahr unsers Heilandes 1940. Redakteur: D. C. R. Zappert. Derselbe Verlag. 112 Seiten. Price, 25 cts.

These two year-books of the U. L. C. A. teem with information on the Church which they represent. The English copy, which contains no reading-matter whatever, excels the German in statistics, minutely and clearly elaborated, and besides presents group pictures of all prominent boards of the Church. No one is able to appreciate the size and work of the U. L. C. A., unless he has carefully studied the statistics of this valuable year-book. Special interesting and helpful features are the daily Bible-lessons and the historical data appended to each day of the year. *Der Lutherische Kalender* offers only the names of the German ministers of the U. L. C. A., besides the German publications of the Church, but it contains very instructive reading-matter, above all some very fine poems, carefully gleaned from the large German Christian literature.

J. THEODORE MUELLER